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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000596

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TALLINN FOR FBI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/08/2015

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SUBJECT: GERMAN AND LITHUANIAN AUTHORITIES SCRUTINIZE MONEY TRAIL FOR IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

¶1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY RSO BRENT A. BARKER. REASON 1.5 (D).

¶2. (C) Summary. The Lithuanian Financial Crime Investigative Service recently disclosed to us that in 2004 it received an informal request from a German government agency regarding a financial transaction used to "purchase equipment in Germany for a nuclear station in Iran." The German request stated that the purchase was legal, but questioned why the payment was effected through Lithuania. End Summary.

¶3. (C) The International Relations Division of the Financial Crimes Investigative Service (FCIS) provided RSO with information regarding an informal request from its German counterpart, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). In June 2004, the FCIS received an informal request from the FIU asking for confirmation that a banking transaction had taken place in Lithuania. The money transfer was allegedly linked to equipment purchased for the Iranian Nuclear Program.

¶4. (C) German authorities asked the Lithuanian FCIS to confirm that on May 14, 2004 the British company Priory Trading LTD had transferred 200,000 Euros from their account in the Snoras Bank of Lithuania (Account # 840370477) to the Commercial Bank of Berlin account of the German company, Solo Handels GmbH (Account # 238828800). The FCIS confirmed to Germany that the transaction had taken place.

¶5. (C) According to the FCIS, the German FIU informal request stated that the transaction was to "purchase equipment in Germany for a nuclear station in Iran." The German FIU stated that the purchase was legal, but sought insights about why the payment originated in Lithuania. Lithuania confirmed that the transaction did occur, and stated that it did not violate any Lithuanian laws. By the time of the German request, the account was closed. The Lithuanian FCIS told the German FIU to submit a formal request through official channels if it required any further information. Germany submitted no official request related to this transaction.

¶6. (C) Comment. The FCIS official stated that he could provide the information reported above because it was part of an informal request and not a formal request. RSO asked for additional information, such who transferred the 200,000 Euros into the Snoras Bank. The official replied that information was protected by Lithuanian banking laws and could not be disclosed informally. But he did say that the Untied States could obtain additional information by making a formal request through the MLAT process or through a FINCEN request.

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